



August 1, 2005

It's time for immunization benchmarking again! As part of your provider agreement with the Department of Health to receive childhood vaccines, all health care providers are required to participate in a one-month survey of every child who receives state-supplied vaccine. This year, the benchmarking activity will be conducted during the month of **September**.

In the past, we have provided survey forms for each parent or guardian to complete during the benchmarking month. For 2005, the data collection process has been revised --- instead of parents completing the survey form, each provider practice will be given tally sheets to record the date of birth and insurance information every time a state-supplied vaccine is given to a child under age 19. A supply of these tally sheets is included in this mailing, along with self-addressed postage-paid return envelopes. Helpful hints for completing the benchmarking logs are printed on the back of each sheet. **Please return all the completed tally sheets by October 15, 2005.**

About the VFC program

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program is a federal entitlement program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). VFC provides vaccines for children under age 19 who are Medicaid enrolled, uninsured, under-insured, or American Indian/Alaskan Native. The CDC requires benchmarking to ensure continued federal VFC funding for DOH's Immunization Program.

Information for staff and parents/patients

- Participating in this benchmarking activity, part of each provider office's agreement with the Department of Health, enables the state to document the percentage of children who are eligible for federal funding of vaccine under the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program.
- All public and private medical provider offices that use state-supplied vaccine (including federally qualified health centers, community and migrant health centers, local health department clinics, hospitals, schools, juvenile facilities, etc.) must participate in the benchmarking project.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Immunization Program requires the state to provide actual data to document the percentage of children who are eligible to receive vaccine provided by the VFC Program. The amount of VFC-funded vaccine received is directly linked to the number of children meeting VFC eligibility.
- Federal requirements mandate that benchmarking information be collected for every child being vaccinated at any clinic or medical provider site that uses state-supplied vaccine.

We appreciate your assistance in making this activity a success. If you have questions about the VFC Program or the benchmarking process, please call Katherine Harris-Wollburg at 360-236-3513 or Katherine.harris-wollburg@doh.wa.gov.